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TRIBUTE TO DR. NEVILLE A.
PARKER, Ph.D.

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 2009

Mr. SERRANO. Madam Speaker, as our nation celebrates Black History Month and its theme "The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas," it is with great pleasure that I rise to honor Dr. Neville A. Parker, Ph.D., an African-American who has devoted himself to the advancement of science and to broadening the participation of under-represented minorities in the fields of mathematics, technology and engineering. Dr. Parker enjoys a distinguished career in international transportation and has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to professionals in developing countries.

Dr. Parker's academic training in engineering began in 1965, when he received a B.E. in Civil Engineering from the City University of New York. He later received an M.E. in Transportation Engineering and a Ph.D. in Systems Engineering from Cornell University in 1966 and 1971, respectively. Dr. Parker is a Registered Professional Engineer in both the United States and the United Republic of Tanzania.

After receiving his Ph.D., Dr. Parker began his illustrious professional career by teaching Civil Engineering at Howard University. He remained in this post until 1979, the last three years of which he spent at the University of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania as a Senior Fulbright Scholar. Dr. Parker's talents and leadership were immediately recognized, and soon after arriving he became the Head of the Department of Civil Engineering. Dr. Parker's work on engineering capacity building in Tanzania and East and South Africa began with the delivery of a keynote address at the Sixth Pan-African Conference in 1974. Over the subsequent twelve years, Dr. Parker founded and coordinated several highly regarded professional associations, and authored policy documents, studies, and proposals that drew much needed funding to Africa and transformed the field.

In 1989, Dr. Parker returned to the City College of New York as the Herbert G. Kayser Professor of Civil Engineering and the Director of the City University of New York (CUNY) Institute for Transportation Systems. In this capacity, Dr. Parker set the bar for innovative work with professionals in developing countries through the implementation of training programs and collaborations. From 1987 to 1998, Dr. Parker served as Chief Coordinator for the International Road Federation's annual Executive Conferences on Road Asset Management, attracting over three hundred executive level transportation professionals from more than sixty countries across the globe.

Dr. Parker is widely published in international journals and is the co-author of a foundational textbook on highway engineering challenges in Africa. His multiple leadership roles in national and international professional associations are a testament to the respect that so many of Dr. Parker's peers have for him.

Notwithstanding a demanding travel and research schedule, Dr. Parker has retained a steadfast commitment to the education of CUNY students. His transportation infrastructure management courses and supervision of Masters projects and doctoral dissertations are creating a new generation of scholars and practitioners that, following in Dr. Parker's footsteps, will make their own unique contributions for the betterment of our society. Throughout his professional career, Dr. Parker has worked tirelessly to increase minority participation in the sciences. He was Project Director of the Research Careers for Minority Scholars program at City College from 1989–1997 and is the current Director of the New York City Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation program.

Dr. Parker has admirably extended his expertise, resources, and commitment to a myriad of efforts to improve his local Harlem community. A vital member of the Manhattan Borough President Office's Go Green East Harlem Steering Committee, Dr. Parker is currently developing a simulation model to evaluate the public health impacts of transportation, particularly truck and bus operations, in a larger effort to improve air quality. He previously served as the Co-Chair of the Transportation and Economic Development Committee for the Empowerment Zone application, and is recognized for his research on public empowerment in transportation decision-making processes.

Well-respected among his peers, Dr. Parker has received numerous awards including: the Black Engineer of the Year—Outstanding Educator Award (1994); the Giant in Science Award (1996); and the Outstanding Achievement in Education Award (2003). He was recognized in 2006 as one of the top 25 African Americans in education, science and medicine by New York's Who's Who.

Madam Speaker, Dr. Parker is a role model and an inspiration to us all. His passion for the progress of science and his commitment to expanding opportunities in this field to under-represented communities is commendable. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Neville A. Parker.

SHARING THE CARIBBEAN'S APPRECIATION FOR PRESIDENT OBAMA'S INAUGURATION

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share the optimism of the Caribbean people in response to the historic inauguration of Barack Obama on January 20th, 2009. The New York CARIB News has deemed the 44th presidency "a watershed, a significant departure from where we once were as a nation." What a great feeling it is to know that when Mr. Obama put his hand on the Bible used by Lincoln to vow to uphold the nation's constitution, it was well received by people of the Caribbean and around the world. I share the sentiment expressed by the reporters of New York CARIB that it was a moment to savor. A news article in the publication titled, "U.S./Caribbean-Relations: On the Verge of a new Chapter in America and World History," makes the case.

[From the New York CARIB News, Jan. 20, 2009]

ON THE VERGE OF A NEW CHAPTER IN AMERICA AND WORLD HISTORY

As a soldier in the civil rights movement of almost half a century ago, a person on the front line of the battle for equality has lived through and has helped to break down the barriers that have opened the flood gates to next week's historic event.

Naturally, John Lewis, a Congressman from Georgia and a sharecropper's son who shared the stage of the "March on Washington" in 1963 with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., quite clearly understands the monumental significance of the official swearing in Washington on January 20th, the inauguration of Barack Hussein Obama as the 44th President of the United States and the nation's first Black Commander-in-Chief. It has been a long time in coming. The road to the inauguration was soaked in the blood, sweat, and tears of millions, both Black and white, who like John Lewis, Marcus Garvey, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Roger Wilkins, and a long list of thousands of major iconic figures in American history, had a vision of what was possible in a country in which race was at the core of public policy.

"Without the Emancipation Proclamation, the sit-ins, the Freedom Rides, the march on Washington, there may not be a Barack Obama," was the way John Lewis summed up the set of building blocks, which have placed us on the cusp of a new chapter in America's history. It signals the promise of more than a new way of thinking but a fresh and inclusive approach to decision-making in a nation whose influence affects almost every corner of the globe.

"It's the pinnacle," said Roger Wilkins, a former university history professor in Washington, as he reflected on the impact of Obama's November 4th victory at the polls. It stands to reason, therefore, that as we look forward to Tuesday's momentous step we cast our minds back to the days when in 1857 the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark Dred Scott case decided that Blacks "had no rights which any white man was bound to respect." Next, it took President Abraham Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 to free all slaves in Confederate States.

Just in case, you think we are delving into ancient history to prove a point, just remember that it was about 50 years ago, George Wallace, Alabama's most notorious segregationist Governor, vowed "segregation today . . . segregation forever."

Less than 20 years before that, African American servicemen and women defended this country during the Second World War fighting or serving in segregated units. Who could have imaged back then that we would have lived to see the day when Colin Powell, a Black man with Caribbean family roots, would in less, than 40 years, become the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of State and much later the U.S. Secretary of State.

And it was during Obama's lifetime, when he was two years old that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 became the law of the land, officially removing the stain of racial prejudice from our lives. It would take decades and scores of legal tests at the highest levels of our state and federal judicial systems to ensure that the Act was accepted by most Americans.

Small wonder, then, that President Bill Clinton once described racism as "America's curse."

That's why when Chief Justice Roberts administers the presidential oath of office and Obama puts his hand on the Bible once used by Lincoln to vow to uphold the nation's